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ABSTRACT

High turnover rates among school board members, increasing complexity of school affairs, high costs of education, and demographic upheavals are among the factors that make efficient school board management very difficult. To cope with these factors, school board members need inservice training, particularly at the local level. Further, this inservice training should follow specific guidelines and be geared to both the unique needs of the district and the individual composition of the board. Districts, however, do not seem to be designing enough school board development programs that are both appealing to board members and effective. Thus, improvement is vitally needed in local inservice training efforts for school board members. Ten guidelines for creating a local inservice program are presented, as is the questionnaire concerning school board development that was distributed at the 1980 National School Boards Association convention. (Author/IRT)

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EDUCATING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION: DO'S AND DON'TS
by
Antonia Neubauer

Let me begin this forum by introducing our school board. Perhaps you've met some of these people ... perhaps they are members of your board. The first member I'd like to introduce is Ebenezer Scrooge.

Ebenezer Scrooge: Ebenezer is ^{the} septuagenarian representative of Citizens Opposed to School Taxes! (COST) - the organization of citizens with a fixed income. His favorite line begins "In my day ..."

Dr. Frank N. Stein: Frank is a child psychologist and the board liberal. As one of two democratic board members, Dr. Frank narrowly won election as a result of a heavy turnout of highschool seniors.

Wilamena Wadell: Behind Wilamena's generous posterior is a strong-willed woman who has fought long and hard for quality education. Wilamena began as a wrapper of Campbell Soup labels in the school media center and worked her way up through the PTO ranks until she won her present position.

Mr. Shed A. Yamouth: Shed is a lawyer who really wants to use the school board as a stepping stone for public office. As such, he takes every opportunity to speak from his pulpit and to get his face in the newspaper.

Ida Wanano: Ida was a compromise candidate and has spent three years on the board vacillating from side to side on every issue of importance. Nevertheless, her heart is in the right place ... or is it the left?

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Bernard Fell Hutton: When Bernard talks, everyone listens. Bernard sells real estate and knows more about what is happening in town than anyone on the board! Bernard doesn't know much about the fine points of curriculum, but he sure can find buyers for closed school buildings.

Rocky Feller: Vice President of the town's largest savings bank and president of this school board, Rocky masterfully uses Robert's Rules of Order to control the political climate. He always wears a 3-piece suit, and his vest has two pockets -- one for his Phi Beta Kappa key and one for his personal I.O.U.'s.

This, then, is our board, not totally different, I'm sure from most of your school boards. It is 72% male; most members have a college degree; the average age is between 40 and 50; and the average income is between \$30,000 and \$40,000 annually. Our board members have risen to this pinnacle of success, because they have been successes in their own lives; and the underlying philosophy of school board membership is that good professional performance yields good school board performance. Yet these board members have other qualities that have been cited as requisites for good school board members -- for example those qualities cited by Stuart Anderson in an ISBJ article:

- He or she has demonstrated a genuine concern for community improvement by membership in service clubs, community improvement

organizations, parent-teacher organizations, church or fraternal organizations.

- They have expressed a desire to serve on the school board in order to provide the children with the best education possible.
- They are willing to spend the time required to become an informed board member.
- They have exhibited the ability to work cooperatively as a team.

Yet, there are a couple of kinks in the system that need to be brought out. First of all, three of the seven board members are new this year, and one has served only one full year. This board is no different from the average board in, let's say, New Jersey, where the average length of tenure of a board member is 3.97 years. Thus there is a constant turnover of board members. To add to the confusion, research indicates that it takes at least two years of school board service before local board members gain the skills and the knowledge to perform effectively. Most of our board hasn't reached that stage yet. Moreover, the school business has gotten terribly complex. Enrollment is declining precipitously; costs are rising; no one wants to pass a referendum and one is needed to cover the budget deficit; parents don't like the lunch program; the teachers went out on strike to protest the dismissal of the sex education teacher; and a group of students stole all the typewriters from the typing class. This board has to make some very serious decisions very fast and the qualities of integrity, perserverance, vision, initiative

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and courage may just not do the trick. Very seriously, for a minute, school board members direct perhaps the most crucially important and often the largest "business" in your districts. The board's decisions touch almost every member of your communities -- children, teachers and citizens alike. In order to be able to understand the issues and the problems that face them and to be able to act effectively and decisively, board members need to have a vital, on-going orientation and professional development program.

Yet what is going on at the local level for this board? The "board development program" lies in the hands of our illustrious superintendent -- Dick Shunary. Dick has a tremendous amount of information at his fingertips. Unfortunately, not much of it goes anywhere else. He thinks about organizing a development program, but there never seems to be time. Either he's busy or the board is busy. Besides, he feels sort of uncomfortable about suggesting that he, an employee, train his employers. Also, in a funny way, he's nervous about having his board know too much. This way, they can't be too critical. In any case, he does help somewhat. He encourages members to attend state and national school board conventions and sees to it that they all get the American School Board Journal. After the board election he takes new board members on a tour of the facilities. He also has his secretary type up backup information before board meetings and is available for meetings with and questions from his board members. Once a month he even lunches with his board president.

Is this portrait farfetched? Not terribly. Jim and I took a small survey of 181 board members and superintendents in San Francisco... the survey that you just filled out. On the basis of this survey Dick Shunary may be doing more than many superintendents are to help their board members learn the ins and outs of school affairs. Although our survey is not a major scientific study, certain trends did emerge. For this forum, I have grouped them according to "Do's" and "Don'ts" of school board professional development. I will let you peruse my don'ts - I want to review the "Do's"

10 DO'S FOR A LOCAL INSERVICE PROGRAM

- 1. DO EXPAND LOCAL EFFORTS. THERE IS MUCH OF WHAT IS INDIVIDUAL AND UNIQUE IN THE RUNNING OF YOUR DISTRICT THAT CAN ONLY BE TAUGHT IN A HOMESTYLE CONTEXT.

Our study indicated that too often districts are delegating inservice efforts to the state and to the National School Boards Associations. To be sure, there are certain topics and issues that can best be handled at the state and national level, but these topics are necessarily general. Moreover, it is healthy for board members to meet compatriots from other regions. Yet board members also need very specific local information, such as how to read line items on their budgets, what the definition of "pupil personnel services" is, and how their lunch programs are being handled. They also need to know how to relate the legal changes, financial changes, and the like to their own individual situations. Yet if you look at question #4 and find district level activities, you'll see that we aren't helping the B.F. Huttons learn much about curriculum.

- 73% of our board members had no board retreats
- 34% don't even have an orientation program
- 51% have had no experts lead special programs at board meetings
- 51% have not visited schools outside their districts
- 44% have had no talks by federal, state or local officials.

We can and should do more.

2. DO BASE YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ON A NEEDS ASSESSMENT, SO THAT EFFORTS CAN BE DIRECTED TO THE MOST CRITICAL DISTRICT AND BOARD CONCERNS.

Question 11 asked board members to rate themselves on skills and areas of knowledge that were vital for effective boardsmanship, and 11a asked them to select the skills they would most like to develop in the next six months. Overall, our boardmembers felt most skilled in:

- managing time
- influencing boards
- community relations
- evaluating the superintendent

They felt least skilled in:

- collective bargaining
- applying scientific management
- assessing legislation and court rulings
- citing school policies

Looking at board member responses, I grouped these responses into clusters:

1. Time Jugglers: those that rate themselves low in all areas save that of balancing their time between board family and business.
2. Self-Perceived Experts: those who felt that they were skilled in everything
3. Concerned Politicians: those who focus outward on the community and who feel that their skills lie in presenting community wishes to the board and eventually making the board more responsive to these wishes.
4. Responsible Politicians: those boardmembers who walk a tight-rope, trying to balance community and school, local needs and federal and state mandates.
5. Power Politicians: those members who use their skills to influence the people around them - board, community and administration.

Looking at these clusters by sex, we find that more men than women are time jugglers. Perhaps business demands weigh heavily. A larger percentage of women are power politicians. (What would woman's lib say to that!) In terms of occupation, educators (many of them) saw themselves as experts, up on everything; professionals and homemakers were the politicians.

Within your districts, you ought to examine the types of board members you have and look at their needs in relation to the key problems and issues they will have to face.

3. DO MAKE SURE THAT THE QUALITY OF INSERVICE IS HIGH, SO THAT A BOARD MEMBER'S PRECIOUS TIME IS WELL USED. BE SURE ALL INSTRUCTORS ARE COMPETENT.

Too often we malign board members, claiming that they don't want to learn, yet the single key constraint is TIME, according to our respondents. How can the board member juggle job and family, and still attend board meetings? The average board member works hard, spending about 20 hours/month on his non-paying job. How much more can we ask? We certainly can make sure that the time is well spent. One third of our respondents cited the poor quality of their inservice sessions. We can control quality and see to it that boardmembers have the opportunity to participate in something productive.

If one asks boardmembers how they want to go about familiarizing themselves with something new, their message was clear. The most productive

form of professional development is to talk with an expert or to visit a site where the problem under consideration is handled effectively. We don't do this enough. 51% of the respondents, if you remember, have had no experts at board meetings in the past two years; nor have they visited any schools outside their districts. In sum, we need to reevaluate how we are allocating our precious supply of board member inservice hours.

4. DO SEE THAT BOARD DEVELOPMENT HAS DIRECT JOB PAYOFF. BOARD MEMBERS LIKE TO SEE TANGIBLE RESULTS OF THEIR EFFORTS. RELATE THE PROGRAMS TO THE DISTRICT'S PROBLEMS.

Question #2a asks board members how they knew inservice was effective. The people that we surveyed said that they knew development activities were beneficial when they looked at the results, when they saw how the knowledge and skills they had acquired was applied to district programs. To support their arguments, these people cited sample concrete benefits, such as;

- passing referendums
- overturning laws in the state legislature
- winning re-election
- working faster and more efficiently at meetings
- firing the superintendent

Similarly, our boardmembers cited other less tangible yet very vital benefits:

- an improved grasp of issues and problems
- more interest and discussion at meetings
- an influx of new ideas

Boardmembers who had been on retreats talked about an improvement in board relations and of a new willingness to work together. The meaning is clear: if people feel their efforts will be meaningful and productive, they will find extra time in their busy schedules, they will work harder, and they will not lose interest and become alienated.

5. DO VARY THE PROGRAM SO THAT IT MEETS BOTH INSTITUTIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL NEEDS FOR GROWTH.

When our board members were asked who or what made the greatest contribution to them as board members, their response was simple:

- conversations with the superintendent
- NSBA conventions (they were there at the time!)
- experience as a parent
- State school board association workshops
- professional experience

Items of least value were:

- Handbooks for new board members
- School board association newsletters and magazines
- Experiences with the local board prior to serving on it. (Board members found that being a board member changes one's perspective. Previous board contact does not imply an understanding of the actual inner workings of the board.)

Clustering responses, the following categories of board members emerged:

- those that felt that experience of one sort or another was the largest contributor to their effectiveness. Overall, this group was not very involved, and rated most activities very low.

- those who liked reading journals and newsletters, and who liked going to conventions and workshops
- those who liked anything, providing it takes place outside the district
- those who relied on personal experiences, yet also got big help from talking to colleagues
- those for whom everything helped

Comparing the clusters in questions 10 and 11, we found that "time jugglers" tend to prefer learning from experience. They just don't feel the need for formal sessions. Experts try harder; they attend all the development activities they can find. The concerned politicians belong to one of two groups - those that lean towards magazines and conventions and those that rely on experience or meetings with colleagues. Responsible politicians like everything, especially that which occurs outside the district. Poor politicians rely on either experience or on all things that occur outside the district. Thus there is a variety of needs and desires for development on each board. The more program variety that can be provided, the more interest and participation that can be aroused.

Board member preferences, however, ought not to determine all choices for board development programs. The educational institution itself sometimes makes its own demands on the board - demands the board may consider uninteresting or unpleasant. Our survey indicated that just because a board member rated himself or herself low in a skill or an area of knowledge did not mean that he or she wanted to upgrade his or her ability. Board members tended to want to improve what they knew best, and to leave aside what made them feel uncomfortable. In organizing development sessions, then, it is important to examine what board members need as well as what they want.

6. DO TRY AND MAKE DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS ACCESSIBLE IN TERMS OF TIME AND LOCATION. TALK TO BOARD MEMBERS TO SEE WHAT IS MOST CONVENIENT FOR THEM.

No time is a good time, and men have more difficulty in juggling time than do women. (Perhaps women can attend sessions and then report to men). Overall, weekend meetings have the edge, and weekday meetings are impossible. Just don't be arbitrary in scheduling or locating sessions. Poll your board.

7. DO ALLOCATE FUNDS FOR SCHOOL BOARD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.

A key constraint on the initiation or expansion of inservice programs most certainly is money. Yet board inefficiency costs more money. (Consider the cases of Chicago or Trenton, to mention two of the more notorious). Professional development is as critical for board members as it is for our district's teachers. Money should officially be set aside in the school budget for board development activities - not junkets, but activities whose results can directly, tangibly benefit your district.

8. DO SEE TO IT THAT DEVELOPMENT IS A CONTINUOUS AND COMPREHENSIVE PROCESS, RATHER THAN A SPORADIC, BANDAID TYPE ONE.

The essence of a good development program is that it be balanced, that it be a planned, goal-directed process aimed at both inducing change and at helping individual board members adapt to the educational organization. A viable, planned development program will relate to board members at all levels of service - from novices to veterans. Such a program would include

orientation as well as special interest programs. Given the high rate of , board turnover and the long adjustment period needed, orientation, especially, is vital. Unfortunately, as our survey indicates:

- 46% of our respondents had no formal board development program
- 39% had an informal program: working at board member skills when the opportunities arose
- 12% only said that they had a program. Yet of these 12%, two did not, in fact, have any program at all, and one was Canadian.

9. DO MAKE PROGRAMS MORE PARTICIPATORY, INCLUDING ALL MEMBERS OF YOUR COMMUNITY - EXPERTS, CITIZENS, LEGISLATORS, MERCHANTS, TEACHERS AS WELL AS BOARD MEMBERS.

No study is needed to prove that few people attend board meetings or extra board sessions other than board members, administration and newspaper reporters . . . that is unless you threaten to eliminate the lunch program or let the kids come home from school earlier! Yet this "Do" has other implications.

Development programs can benefit groups other than the target population. For example, several of our respondents mentioned attending teacher in-service sessions. More board members should be encouraged to do the same. Further, the community can benefit from board programs in terms of knowledge and of their perceptions of the board as people. Finally, development programs,, as our board members said, do not allow for enough experts, citizens, out-of-district administration, or teachers to both participate in or to lead. We do not use our local human resources sufficiently.

10. Finally, DO INSTITUTE SOME KIND OF WRITTEN DISTRICT POLICY ON BOARD DEVELOPMENT, ASSURING ITS PART IN OVERALL BOARDSMANSHIP.

If board development has a formal place in a district's policy books, there is a greater possibility of its expansion and maintenance. Furthermore, if policy can be used as a legitimizer, expenses for experts or for retreats can be more easily justified. Yet over half of our respondents said that they had no written policies. Another 20% didn't even know if they did or didnot have board development policies. Only 25% of our school board members said that they had policies on inservice, and our question re didn't ask what kind of policies they had.

All in all, we can improve our efforts to help the Ida Wananos of the world. Most boards really do try hard, and the school board system is the best effort our democratic system has come up with. As Administrators, we owe it to our school boards to provide support services (even if it is in spite their wishes occasionally) and to reject the mushroom theory of board development. (That's where you take a new board member and put him in a dark corner. Cover him with manure and leave him alone to see if he grows!)

Let me conclude by citing a plea, a plea for the institution of a comprehensive school board inservice program written by an Illinois board member:

We get on the job training by fulfilling our responsibilities, attending board meetings, serving on committees, and reading the backup material, etc. But this form of education is slow, fragmented, and, in my experience, incomplete. There are

always important gaps in our knowledge that we don't fill in for a variety of reasons, no matter how long we are on the board. We are too timid to ask about what we don't know in public for fear of appearing stupid; we don't want to take up valuable board time by continually requesting supplementary information; and we deal mostly with people (even fellow board members when they report on committee activities) who don't fully realize the depth of our ignorance about their subject, and therefore, make little attempt to present us with a comprehensive, jargon-free, well-organized presentation.

To help us all, new and old board members alike, get a better grip on school board matters, I propose you initiate . . . an orientation and review program late in the spring.

Thank you all. If you are interested I will leave some copies of the "Do's" and the "Don'ts" in the front of the room for you.

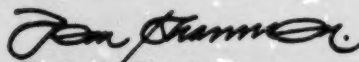


Dear 1980 NSBA Convention Attendee:

Please take a few minutes to help NSBA serve you better. Each year, through surveys such as this, NSBA attempts to learn more about the needs of school boards, so that we can better understand and serve. Please be candid. This questionnaire is anonymous.

Please return your completed questionnaire to an usher as you leave this session. If this is not possible, please return your questionnaire to the Registration area or to the NSBA booth #1221 on the Exhibit floor.

Thank you for your assistance.


Thomas A. Shannon
Executive Director

In this survey, the term SCHOOL BOARD DEVELOPMENT refers to those programs and activities which help board members learn.

1. Is there a formal SCHOOL BOARD DEVELOPMENT program in your school district? That is, does the district or the board itself regularly and systematically seek to build the school board's own skills and knowledge?

A formal SCHOOL BOARD DEVELOPMENT program would likely have a budget, someone in charge, and be thought of as a normal part of school district operation.

- ☐ (1) Yes. My district has a formal SCHOOL BOARD DEVELOPMENT program.
- ☐ (2) Sort of. Our procedures are informal. We work at improving school board skills and knowledge as needed, when opportunities arise, or when a board member expresses interest.
- ☐ (3) No. My district does not have a formal SCHOOL BOARD DEVELOPMENT program.
- ☐ (4) I don't know.

2. What has your district done, in the last 2 years, that was particularly effective at raising the skills and knowledge of the board or of specific members of the board?

2a. Briefly, how do you know this was effective?

3. What has your district done, in the last 2 years, that proved to be ineffective at raising the skills and knowledge of the board or of specific members of the board?

3a. Briefly, how do you know this was ineffective?

4. Which of the following activities have occurred during the last 2 years in your district? Where these occur, does the district pay the costs, or do board members pay the costs?

	In the last 2 years, we did this. District paid costs.	In the last 2 years, we did this. Board members paid costs.	We have not done this in the last 2 years.
A. Weekend retreat for board members.	____ (1)	____ (2)	____ (3)
B. Orientation workshop for school board members.	____ (1)	____ (2)	____ (3)
C. Board member participation in state convention of school board assn.	____ (1)	____ (2)	____ (3)
D. Formal survey of board members' needs for purposes of planning SCHOOL BOARD DEVELOPMENT activities.	____ (1)	____ (2)	____ (3)
E. Board member participation in NSBA national convention.	____ (1)	____ (2)	____ (3)
F. Programs, led by experts, at local school board functions.	____ (1)	____ (2)	____ (3)
G. School board member visits to schools within your district.	____ (1)	____ (2)	____ (3)
H. School board member visits to schools outside your district.	____ (1)	____ (2)	____ (3)
I. School board member participation in workshops or seminars conducted by a university or school board assn.	____ (1)	____ (2)	____ (3)
J. Talks to school board members by federal, state or local education officials on selected topics.	____ (1)	____ (2)	____ (3)
K. Subscription(s) to the American School Board Journal for board members.	____ (1)	____ (2)	____ (3)
L. Subscription(s) to other educational journals for board members to read.	____ (1)	____ (2)	____ (3)

5. Below are kinds of persons that a school district might turn to for information or consultation on problems or matters of concern in a district. Suppose you felt it necessary for someone to speak with (consult) with your board about a matter of concern. Which three of the following kinds of persons would your district most likely seek out?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ____ (1) Local staff members. | ____ (7) NSBA staff. |
| ____ (2) Staff from nearby districts. | ____ (8) Staff of an intermediate or regional district or service center. |
| ____ (3) Superintendent from nearby. | ____ (9) Local citizen with expertise. |
| ____ (4) State ed. dept. staff. | ____ (10) College or university professors. |
| ____ (5) Federal government staff. | ____ (11) Other. (Please explain: _____) |
| ____ (6) State school bd. assn. staff. | |

6. Does your district have one or more written school board policies about SCHOOL BOARD DEVELOPMENT?

- ____ (1) Yes. ____ (2) No. ____ (3) I don't know.

7. When SCHOOL BOARD DEVELOPMENT activities such as workshops, seminars, conventions, tours and the like are available, people must choose to participate or not. Which three of the following are the most important reasons why you, personally, would not attend such development activities, even though the subject matter were important for your district or yourself?

- | | |
|--|--|
| ____ (1) Lack of interest on my part. | ____ (9) Poor quality of such events. |
| ____ (2) Lack of board president interest. | ____ (10) Embarrassment over personal ignorance of subject matter. |
| ____ (3) Lack of superintendent interest. | ____ (11) Week-end meetings badly timed. |
| ____ (4) Lack of whole board interest. | ____ (12) Week-day meetings badly timed. |
| ____ (5) Pressure to conserve funds. | ____ (13) Evening meetings badly timed. |
| ____ (6) Lack of personal funds. | ____ (14) Meetings are too long. |
| ____ (7) No time; business competes. | ____ (15) Other (Please explain: _____) |
| ____ (8) No time; family competes. | |

8. When SCHOOL BOARD DEVELOPMENT activities such as workshops, seminars, conventions, tours and the like are available, as a rule in your district, who attends?
(Please check as many as are appropriate.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ (1) Board members only. | ☐ (7) PTA members. |
| ☐ (2) Key staff. | ☐ (8) Advisory committee members. |
| ☐ (3) Candidates for the board. | ☐ (9) Students. |
| ☐ (4) Interested district employees. | ☐ (10) Newspaper or TV reporters. |
| ☐ (5) Interested district teachers. | ☐ (11) Other. (Please explain: _____) |
| ☐ (6) Interested citizens. | |

9. Imagine that you are confronted with the need, one month from today, of being familiar with a new subject about which you are now ignorant -- for example, computer literacy. Imagine, also, that all the following opportunities to learn about the subject are available to you, but you can choose only two. Which one or two would you select?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ (1) Attend 2-hour expert lecture. | ☐ (8) Visit a school or other site where topic is handled effectively. |
| ☐ (2) Talk with expert over lunch. | ☐ (9) Read articles or books selected by school district staff. |
| ☐ (3) Listen to audiotape cassette. | ☐ (10) Read articles or books selected by yourself from a library. |
| ☐ (4) See a film or videotape. | ☐ (11) None of these. Instead, I would: |
| ☐ (5) Confer privately with supt. | |
| ☐ (6) Confer privately with staff. | ☐ (12) None of these. I'd fake it. |
| ☐ (7) Confer privately with board member(s). | |

10. Typically, board members learn from many people, resources and experiences. Some of these make a greater contribution than others. Thinking back over your experience as a board member, please rate the contribution that each of the following has made to your knowledge and skill; for each, circle one of the numbers at the right. (If you have not experienced an item, leave it blank.) "1" means very little contribution. "7" means major contribution.

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Conversations with your board president. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| B. Conversations with your board colleagues. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| C. Conversations with your superintendent. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| D. Conversations with your personnel staff. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| E. Conversations with your school business staff. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| F. Conversations with your curriculum staff. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| G. Conversations with teachers in your district. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| H. Conversations with administrators in your district. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| I. Conversations with students in your district. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| J. Conversations with voters in your district. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| K. Conversations with key community leaders. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| L. Formal events at out-of-district meetings. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| M. Informal conversations at out-of-district meetings. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| N. Reading a handbook for new board members. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| O. Reading newsletters & magazines from your state school boards association. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| P. Reading the American School Board Journal. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Q. Reading newsletters & magazines from NSBA. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| R. Reading educational magazines. (Which ones?) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | | |
| S. Attending state school bd. assn. conventions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| T. Attending NSBA national convention. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| U. Attending state school bd. assn. workshops. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| V. Attending NSBA workshops. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| W. Attending a new board member orientation in your district. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| X. Attending a new board member orientation conference outside your district. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Y. Your personal experience in your profession. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Z. Your experiences with the local board prior to serving on it. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| AA. Your previous experience on other boards. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| BB. Your experience as a parent of school kids. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| CC. Your training as an educator. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| DD. Your previous work experience in a school district. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

11. Listed below are skills and knowledge considered vital for effective board service. Please rate your own level of skill or knowledge. On the scale here, "1" means little skill or knowledge; "7" means a great deal.

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Applying parliamentary procedure to school board meetings. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| B. Managing one's personal time between board, family, personal and business life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| C. Translating statistical data (about population, social and financial changes, for example, or test scores) into policy needs of your district. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| D. Assessing recent legislation and court rulings for their effects on your district. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| E. Citing school district written policies. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| F. Balancing local needs with the constraints of local, state and federal mandates & finances. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| G. Learning the ins-and-outs of the needs, politics and personalities in community groups and businesses. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| H. Evaluating the strengths and shortcomings of a school superintendent. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| I. Applying collective bargaining techniques to local negotiating situations. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| J. Communicating both with educators and with citizens about educational programs in your district. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| K. Communicating with public officials and legislators about your district. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| L. Applying scientific management techniques to school district practices such as budgeting, planning, and evaluation of staff & programs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| M. Assessing existing facilities in the light of school district plans and operations. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| N. Representing the interests of your constituents to the school staff while representing the school district to the community. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| O. Influencing the board and other groups in directions you determine are important. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

11a. From the list above, which three skills would you most like to develop during the next year? Please check three.

☐ A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐ D. ☐ E. ☐ F. ☐ G. ☐ H. ☐ I.
☐ J. ☐ K. ☐ L. ☐ M. ☐ N. ☐ O.

12. What is your position in the school district? (Check one.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ (1) School board member. | ☐ (3) Superintendent. |
| ☐ (2) School board president. | ☐ (4) Other (Please specify: _____) |

13. How many years have you served in this position? _____

14. Are you ☐ (1) male? ☐ (2) female?

15. What is your age? _____

16. What is your occupation?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ (1) Educator. | ☐ (6) Physician/dentist. |
| ☐ (2) Business professional. | ☐ (7) Association/union official. |
| ☐ (3) Lawyer. | ☐ (8) Farmer/rancher. |
| ☐ (4) Government employee. | ☐ (9) Homemaker. |
| ☐ (5) Minister. | ☐ (10) Other. (Please specify: _____) |

17. How many students are enrolled in your school district? _____

18. In what state is your school district located? _____

19. Would you describe your school district as predominantly (check one)

☐ (1) Rural? ☐ (2) Small town? ☐ (3) Suburban? ☐ (4) Urban?